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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Creator, redeemer, sustainer, You called us out of darkness into Your marvelous light. Dispel the shadows of confusion in our lives, replacing them with charity and peace. What we do not know, teach us. What we can't see, show us. What we don't have, give us. What we aren't, make us.

Abide with our Senators in their labors, using them as vessels for Your service. Lord, keep them on the path of integrity, strengthened and sustained by Your grace. Bless and keep them. Make Your face shine upon them and be gracious to them. Lift the light of Your countenance upon them and give them Your peace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATIONAL HUNTING, FISHING, AND SHOOTING—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 384, S. 2363, which is the Hagan sportsmen's legislation.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 2363, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 1:45 today, with the time until then equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or our designees, with the majority controlling the first 30 minutes and the Republicans the second 30 minutes. Additionally, Senator LEAHY will control the final 5 minutes and Senator PAUL will control the 5 minutes prior to that.

At 1:45 p.m. there will be two rollcall votes. The first vote will be on confirmation of the nomination of David Barron to be U.S. circuit judge for the First Circuit, and the second vote will be on the adoption of the conference report to accompany H.R. 3060, the WRRDA bill.

TAX EXTENDERS

This week Senate Republicans voted against tax cuts that most of them have said they like. The legislation is widely applauded around the country. I have a letter from 152 different entities that say they love this legislation, and they said it should pass, two of which are the Chamber of Commerce, which is certainly no leftwing group, and the National Association of Manufacturers—the same—and there are scores of others. It seems the only Republicans who do not want this tax cut are the Republicans in Congress. Republicans around the country want these tax cuts, Democrats want these tax cuts, and so do Independents.

This legislation is very important because it would bolster nearly every segment of our society. It helps students and teachers, workers and employers, American families and businesses, all

while saving money and growing our economy.

These 152 organizations that signed this letter to me are pleading with the Senate to extend these tax provisions because not doing so would “inject instability and uncertainty into our economy.”

Republicans say the reason they voted against the bill is because they want to vote on amendments. Yet the only amendment they have identified was a poison pill amendment. Of course, what was the subject matter? Their favorite subject—ObamaCare. It has nothing to do with the extenders.

But we have seen this game play out before. The Senate is not going to vote on “gotcha” amendments designed to score political points. This legislation is too important. I have said all along that I am willing to undertake reasonable, germane amendments. That is certainly appropriate. That is what they did in the Finance Committee. They had an extended markup of this bill in the Finance Committee. The rule they have there is that amendments have to be germane. That rule applied to this bill, as it should, and that is what should be applied here on the floor.

So if Republican Senators can come up with a list of reasonable, germane amendments, I am more than happy to return to the tax extenders bill. Those are amendments I would not pick. They always say: Well, REID is picking our amendments.

Those are their amendments. They can file reasonable, germane amendments. There are a multitude of amendments they could offer.

So let's see if Republicans want to get something done on this legislation. We can debate back and forth on the finer points of Senate procedure endlessly, as has happened around here in the last 5½ years. But at the end of the day it comes down to a simple question: Do you want to get something done for the middle class? Do you want

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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